

such as the wit of Man could erect upon the Principles of Natural Observation.

From the words thus Paraphras'd I shall endeavour to shew these two things. 1st. The great and superlative excellence of the Christian Religion, compar'd to a Pearl of great price. And, 2^{dly}, our obligation to part with all other inferior advantages to purchase or attain it, like the Merchant who went and sold all that he had and bought it.

I And first, the excellency of the Kingdom of Heaven, or the Christian Religion beyond all other Schemes of happiness will easily appear, if we consider the Author of it.

Christ is the great Author and Finisher of our Faith; God and Man incomprehensibly united in one Person. The Gospel is the revelation of the Righteousness of God through Faith; it discovers to us the true fountain of our misery, which no Philosophy could do; that the whole race of Mankind are corrupted and ruin'd in Adam, who deny'd the guilt and stain of his Transgression to all his Posterity. In Adam we all die the Temporal death, which is once appointed for all Men; and the Spiritual death, which consists in the eternal separation of the Soul from the presence of God's favour, and the power of his Grace. This convinces us of the efficacy

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efficacy of Man's Righteousness to his own Salvation, to appease and avert the wrath of God, or to obtain his loving kindness, which as the *Psalmist* teaches, is better than life itself. The success and acceptance of our piety and devotion depends upon the knowledge of Man's nature as it stands in relation to the nature of God. If therefore Man's nature in being most defective and sinful be rendred unacceptable and odious to God, what method of atonement is necessary to reconcile us to him? And here 'tis absolutely requisite that God himself alone should be the first and free proposer; we can only hope to obtain his mercy upon his own gracious conditions; and consequently the satisfaction of his Will in a matter of such mighty importance to us can only be deduc'd from himself. The natural Man in all his full strength of wit and sagacity knoweth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, because they are Spiritually discerned. Who therefore hath known the mind of God, or who hath been his Counsellor? Flesh and blood neither hath nor can reveal it to us, but the Father which is in Heaven. God in or by Christ (as *St. Paul* instructs us) reconcil'd the world to himself, not imputing their transgressions, and hath committed to the Apostles the Word of Reconciliation.

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The remission of our Sins, and the acceptation of our Persons; the intire work of our Redemption; the substance and the evidence of our Christian Faith consists now, and was founded at the beginning, not in the wisdom of Men, but in the power of God. It is the wisdom of God hid from Ages, and not the wisdom of the world, which is foolishness with God.

The observation of *Gamaliel* in the *Acts*, tho' not of Sacred inspiration, is of sure and infallible truth, that whatsoever is of human contrivance in Religion, will come to nothing; in vain should we worship God, teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men. The Testimony upon which our Faith depends is the witness of God by Miracles, and the clear and exact completion of many Predictions, than which there cannot be better evidence produc'd of the Divine consent and approbation. The relation of our Saviour's Miracles takes up a great part of the History of the Gospel. The strict Harmony between the Prophecies and Events (with reference to the Publication of the Gospel, and the Author of it) in Time, Place, Actions, Sufferings, and the Character of the Person joyn'd with the continual expectations of the *Jews*, who were principally concern'd, is so evident, that nothing besides the greatest fascina-
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tion of the most vicious prejudice can hinder us from perceiving their force; in the 51st of *Isaiah*, where the Prophet in all the most solemn sublimity of Majestick sorrow describes the sufferings and the satisfaction of the Messiah, the Painting is so lively, that what the Prophet beheld in Vision may indeed borrow its greater light from the Evangelical Narration, (as the clearest Prophetical descriptions will be more particularly clear when fulfill'd) but certainly it almost equals it in force and power. It is not display'd indeed in so many Particulars, but it is the united force and energy of all together. It is not what St. Peter says of Prophecy, *a light shining in a dark place*, but the clear morning of Divine inspiration immediately preceding the rising Sun. Not only the number and perspicuity of the Predictions, but the Miracles of our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles do most evidently prove and confirm the Truth of Christian Religion; so many in number, so various in their kinds, so ingenuous, free and publick in the manner of their performance, so very wise and charitable in their design, so universally tending to the promotion of the most perfect Piety and Goodness; that 'tis impossible to discover any appearance of tolerable argument that can induce any honest mind to dispute the Truth of Christian Religion,

Religion, so strongly erected upon such firm foundation; To mention no more the Resurrection of our Lord from the Dead, witness'd and assur'd by a long and continual appeal of forty Days together to every sense and faculty of the Apostles and Disciples, and reported afterwards by Men of the greatest simplicity and integrity; by such Witnesses indeed as God himself appointed, but such as he indu'd with a wisdom so mighty as prevail'd over the malice of Hell, the pride of Ambition and Power, the madness of Bigotted zeal, the most universal decay and corruption of Manners, the pomp of Idolatry and Superstition, and subdu'd the whole World to the obedience of the Faith, going on from strength to strength, baffling and beating down the most reluctant and fiercest opposition by the power of his Grace, the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. This I say, will prove beyond refutation the excellency of the Christian Religion above all other Schemes of human happiness, because of the clear and loud appeal it makes to God as its only true and undoubted Author.

But, 2^{dly}, the Excellency of Christian Religion appears in this, that it is the Gospel of Grace: It reveals to us the greatest Glory of the Divine Justice, which was most amply satisfy'd

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by the Sacrifice of Christ upon the Cross, for the sins of the whole world; the mighty triumph of God's own free Grace and Mercy, who loving us when we were enemies to him, and had our minds alienated from him through wicked works, contriv'd this wonderful method of our Reconciliation; much more therefore being actually reconcil'd to God by the death of his Son, we shall be saved by his Life, or by his ever-living to make Intercession for us: By virtue of which Intercession our Prayers are constantly presented before the Throne of Grace, our Sins are forgiven, the stain blotted out, the sentence of condemnation repeal'd and revert, our corruptions subdu'd, our Graces increas'd, and our final happy perseverance secur'd. Our Saviour assures us that his yoke is an easie and gracious yoke, and his burden light; not incumber'd with a multitude of Legal Rites, and Ceremonious Observances, not perplex'd and obscur'd with Types and Figures which brought nothing to perfection; but the clear and substantial Doctrine of God refin'd and purify'd to the last degree. That which God with a most distinct and intelligible voice spake to us in the last days; not the law of a carnal Commandment, but the power of a life which can never be dissolv'd; the perfect law

law of liberty, by which we are advanc'd and enabled to serve God in Holiness and Righteousness without fear all the days of our life. For we becoming the children of adoption, the heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, are consequently redeem'd from the miserable slavery of fear, to the service and obedience of Sons, to the most chearful, willing and easie obedience, because the mind of every sincere and perfect Believer is fill'd with all joy and peace in believing; which must needs be understood of the most lively, sound and operative, not of the languid, slothful and ineffective Belief; Of the Faith which worketh by love, is finish'd by charity, and shall be lost and swallow'd up in Glory. For when that which is perfect shall come, then that which is imperfect shall be done away. In this life notwithstanding all the advantages of the clearest Revelation, we know but in part, with great obscurity and defect, by reason of the unavoidable infirmities of our mortal condition, in comparison of our knowledge in the life to come; for then shall we know also as we are known.

3^{dly}. The Excellency of the Christian Religion appears in this, That the evidence of a life to come is abundantly clearer in the Gospel, than any argument which can be brought, deduc'd from Moral or Natural Considerations, to assure us of the Immortality of the Soul, and the condition in which it exists from the time of its leaving the Body; during the whole state and continuance of its separation. The proof of the Immortality deriv'd from Ancient and General consent, from the refin'd and perfectly spiritual power of the Mind, in forming and apprehending the most universal abstracted Notions; the reason deduc'd from the clear and unassailable liberty of the Will; that lofty Principle of self-determination, which no human force can change, nor any impressions from outward Objects surprize or constrain; and therefore must plainly argue a faculty perfectly spiritual presiding over *Matter* by a distinct independent and absolute regency; and refusing any the smallest conformity to the most subtle laws of Mechanical Motion. These and such like Arguments, when produc'd in their full and compleat vigor, are of singular use, no question, to fortifie the

the Mind against the fear of Death, and to engage them to the strictest purity of life, when no better can be had. But the best and plainest conviction of the Immortality we owe to the Christian Religion. Our Saviour hath brought Life and Immortality to light through the Gospel, by assuring Mankind expressly in clear terms, that they shall be eternally rewarded or punished according to their behaviour here, and therefore that they shall eternally exist after death; not only in their minds or spirits, but also in their Bodies by the vital endless reunion of each other to commence at the General Resurrection.

Lastly, The superlative Dignity of the Christian Religion is most notoriously discern'd by the bright and shining Evidence of our Saviour's own example. There is not one Precept in the whole Gospel, enjoining the study and practice of the most Sublime and Heroical, of the most condescending, affable and popular virtue, of the greatest fortitude and magnanimity in declaring the Truth of God, and suffering and dying for that Declaration, of the most generous contempt of the world, of the most universal and chearful resignation

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to the Sovereign disposal of Providence, of the most wonderful patience and gentleness in teaching the ignorant and perverse, of the greatest lenity and mildness in reprehending others, of the most universal charity and benignity, but what was seen and acknowledg'd to be most singularly eminent in the Life and daily Conversation of our Saviour, in whom the greatest love was temper'd with the highest wisdom, and the most charming sweetness with the most lawful severity.

The easiest and most perspicuous Comment upon the hard and austere Injunctions of the Gospel is the Life and Example of our Blessed Saviour. He commands us to learn Meekness and Humility of him, for he is meek and lowly, and we shall find rest to our Souls. St. Paul exhorts us to follow the Example of the Apostles, as they follow'd Christ. And indeed there is nothing which recommends sound Doctrine and Instruction, with such certain and necessary influence, as when the Teachers conversation and practice is no less severe and orthodox than his Preaching; but this is no where to be found complete in all particulars, but in the Life of our Great Master, who was holy, undefil'd and
separate

separate from Sinners, who did no evil, neither was guile found in his mouth, who went about continually doing good. The peculiar efficacy of Christ's Example consists in this, that it takes away from our minds the effeminate and lazy prepossession about the great and insuperable difficulty of keeping the Commandments, it makes the practice of Vertue appear to be not only possible but familiar and easie. Not only the Notions of Vertue and Religion are most obvious and present to our minds by the Illustrious Example of our Saviour's perfect Obedience, but the intire Idea, the compleat representation of it is visible to sight. The most charming and beautiful Object which human eyes can behold, the shortest and most compendious, the most easie and lively institution of our Christian Morality, the most Pathetical Exhortation to Faith and Obedience, to Patience and Charity, to all the Beauties and Graces, to the life, spirit and lustre of universal honesty, in a noble and generous contempt of the World, and all the Riches, Glories and Pleasures of Life, whenever they pretend to insinuate the least seeming competition with the love of our duty, and the severe Obligations of the Gospel.

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Let us therefore endeavour to imitate the example of our Blessed Saviour, where ever 'tis possible to follow him ; who practis'd himself whatever he commanded others, and is most securely imitable in whatever he commands.

II. Having thus cast our eyes upon some of the most illustrious and shining rays of this Pearl of great price, and consider'd the Kingdom of Heaven, or the Christian Religion, with relation to some of its great Prerogatives ; I proceed to the second General, namely to reflect upon the Obligation incumbent upon us to part with all inferior advantages to purchase or attain it, like the Merchant who sold all that he had and bought it.

And not to insist at present upon the Christian Doctrines of Mortification, self-denial, and contempt of the World, which might be plentifully alledg'd out of every Page of the Gospel, and be strongly confirm'd from the Example of our Saviour and his Apostles, by which we are strictly oblig'd to forsake all and follow him ; we need only rightly to consider with *St. Paul* the excellency of the knowledge of *Christ Jesus* our Lord, and to esteem all things

things loss for the attaining of that knowledge which will render us wise unto Salvation. It is impossible if we permit the Light of the Glorious Gospel to shine upon us, that the Children of this Generation, whose extreme Prospect is bounded by this transitory World, should be wiser than the Children of Light. If we are fully perswaded that it can profit a Man nothing to gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul, it will be easie to neglect the World, and attend to that one thing needful.

To those who are carnally minded, the Kingdom of the Gospel, the glad tydings of Peace and great Joy, the savour of life unto life, are apter to increase their misery than promote their Salvation. It becomes the savour of death unto death to those whose deprav'd and vicious dispositions have render'd em the fierce and implacable adyersaries of Grace. It is the Pearl of inestimable value cast before Swine. It is not so much as the Grace of God receiv'd in vain; but the Holy Spirit perversly resisted, and the counsel of God rejected against our selves. It is by the Sovereign wisdom of the Gospel, that not only the greatest tribulations, but the highest tem-

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poral Felicities will be of great service, and most fruitful profit to us with respect to the happiness of the other World. Not only the Virtues, Patience and Resignation, but the continual exercise of our Temperance and Moderation, of our great and extensive Charity to all that want it, of Liberality, Magnificence and Hospitality (which Noble Virtues suppose and require the great affluence of the good things of this life) will most certainly entitle us to the hopes of our Heavenly Kingdom.

To be rich to the World in this use of our Worldly prosperity, is the best and wisest method of being rich towards God. We are to part indeed with our Pearls of lesser value, if we cannot otherwise purchase the Pearl of great price; but nothing hinders but we may acquire the one without pretermittting the other. If they who are rich in this World are not high minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the Living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy: If they do good, if they be rich in good Works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; according to the decision of the Great Apostle, they are laying

ing up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on Eternal Life.

Patience and Resignation, but the continual exercise of our Temperance and Moderation, of our great and extensive Charity to all that want of Liberty, Magnificence and Hospitality (which Noble Virtues suppose and require the great assistance of the good things of this life) will most certainly enable us to the hopes of our Heavenly Kingdom.

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To be rich to the World in this life of our worldly prosperity, is the best and wisest method of being rich towards God. We are to part indeed with our Pearls of lesser value, if we cannot otherwise purchase the Pearl of great price; but nothing hinders but we may acquire the one without pretermittting the other. If they who are rich in this World are not right minded, not trust in uncertain riches, but in the Living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. If they do good, if they be rich in good Works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; according to the decision of the Great Apostle, they are laying

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A
SERMON

Preach'd before the
FREE-BORN CITIZENS

OF

BRISTOL,

IN

St. *WERBURGE's* Church in the same
City, *August 27. 1702.*

BY

STEPHEN CHAPMAN, M. A.

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STEPHEN CHAMBERLAIN M.A.

OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM

To the Right Worshipful,
and Worshipful, and others
the Free-born Citizens of
Bristol; especially to my
much Esteemed Friend,
Mr. *THOMAS MOORE*,
late President.

GENTLEMEN,

I *Am not Insensible of the great Risque Men
run, who attempt to appear in Publick:
The Age being indeed so very Critical
and Nice; that, notwithstanding the great-
est Caution, it is almost impossible to avoid
Censure. However I have, for once, Ven-
tured, at Your Requests, to Publish my
Thoughts upon this Occasion, being thereto
more especially Encouraged, by the Free and
Generous Example of some Worthy Per-
sons, now Living among You; whose Mag-
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The Epistle Dedicatory.

nificence and Charity, I may Truly and without Flattery say, this Age hath hardly Parallel'd. To Such of You therefore the ensuing Discourse is justly, and more particularly due: who as You gave it Birth, so it begs the Favour of Your Protection. I am sensible of the Meanness of the Performance; But since the main End and Design of it, was the Promotion of Love, and Charity, and the common Interest of this our City, Give it leave to Hope, at least, that it may Live under the Umbrage of so Auspicious a Patronage; Its Publication being wholly in Compliance with Your Commands. I am

GENTLEMEN,

Your most Obliged

humble Servant,

and Fellow-Citizen,

STEPHEN CHAPMAN.

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A
Sermon, &c.

Heb. XIII. 16.

*To do good, and to communicate,
forget not : for with such sa-
crifices God is well pleased.*

SHOULD we suppose Mankind, in a State of Nature, to be in a State of War, and with more than Savage and Brutal Fury, continually worrying and devouring one another: Should we suppose them void of Reason and Understanding, as well as Manners and Civility, and in Dignity of Being, nothing to exceed the Beasts that perish: In a word, should we suppose them the only Creatures incapable of Society and Converse; and by reason of their own Jealousies and Fears, fit rather for Re-

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Retirement and Solitude: I say should we be so grossly mistaken, as to make so wonderfully strange and absurd an Hypothesis, we might indeed introduce an odd and humorous Scene of Affairs into the World, and paint out Ruin and Confusion in most natural and lively Colours. We might set forth Nature it self, labouring under the greatest Agonies and Convulsions, and by faint and languid Efforts, too truly, alas! predicting its approaching Fate. For that surely must come to a suddain End, unless the great Whirl of Things here below, be supported and kept up, by a mutual Correspondence of one Part with another, unless this lovely, this beautiful Machine, (the Work of none but the Divine Architect,) moves regularly on, and constantly maintains its wonted Harmony, and that more Noble and Glorious Part of it, Mankind, be secured by an universal Agreement and Consent, and make it their whole Study and Endeavour, to Promote and Set forward each others Happiness and Repose.

And now, in order for the better and more sure Advancement of such a mutual Amity and Concord, we find that which is
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so consonant and agreeable to the Dictates of our Reason, strongly enforced on us by the surer Light of Revelation, and Precepts, inculcated by GOD himself, and those that were immediately inspired from Him: And such was St. *Paul*, the Author of this Epistle, who, in the Beginning of this Chapter, exhorts the *Hebrews*, (to whom he then wrote) to *Brotherly Love and Charity*, and to be constant and persevering in the Exercise of this truly Noble and Commendable Vertue, which he, elsewhere, affirms to be much more useful and necessary, than any other of the Christian Graces.

And this being a Subject so Suitable and Proper to our present Solemnity, one would think, should be a Pregnant Argument to encourage us likewise, to endeavour each others Good, being under the Obligation of a more than ordinary Tie, both as Fellow-Christians and Fellow-Citizens: seeing that by so doing, the Apostle very plainly doth assure us in the Text, we present the most grateful and acceptable Sacrifice, we can possibly offer in the Sight of GOD.

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To do good, therefore, and to communicate, forget not : for with such Sacrifices God is well pleased. That is, We must not (especially on Publick and Solemn Occasions) be backward in those Acts of Charity and Friendship, whereby we may contribute any ways to Relieve the Necessities of our Brethren: Such necessary Deeds of Beneficence, or Bounty, being the greatest of our Christian Sacrifices, and indeed much more grateful and acceptable in the Sight of GOD, than all those costly Hecatombs, that were the Profuse and Lavish Oblations, not only of the *Heathen*, but the *Jewish* Rites. And GOD himself hath plainly told us, by the Mouth of his Prophet, *Hos. 6. 6. That he will have mercy, and not sacrifice.*

From the Words thus explained, I design a Plain Practical Discourse, and shall accordingly insist upon these Three Particulars.

First, I will shew you what the Apostle here means by *doing good, and communicating.*

Secondly, I will prove, that thus *to do good, and to communicate*, is a grateful and acceptable.

ceptable Sacrifice in the Sight of G O D, and truly Becoming our Christian Profession.

Thirdly and Lastly, I will apply the whole to the present Solemnity, that thereby You may be the better Encouraged to a Free and Generous Contribution towards your Poor and Needy Fellow-Citizens; this being indeed one Principal End and Design of these our Publick Meetings, our Great and Solemn Feasts and Assemblies.

I. I begin with the First of these, namely, To shew what the Apostle here means by *doing Good, and Communicating*: Τῆς δὲ ὑποψίας καὶ κοινωνίας μὴ ἐπιλανθάνεσθε. Be not unmindful of Good Works; but be ever willing (as 'tis exprest in another Place) to Distribute, ready to Share of your Good Things to the Needs and Necessities of the Brethren: to proportion all your Acts of Liberality and Bounty, according to those Blessings that you enjoy in this Life, and not study to be Rich in large Possessions and Estates, but good Deeds; like true Stewards, faithfully Communicating those Blessings committed to your Charge, to the Maintenance and Support of your Fellow-
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Christians. And this seems plainly to import, not only a Promptness or Readiness of Mind ; but an actual Performance of this your Duty, and that too , according to the utmost Extent of your Ability and Power.

For if there be not (as the Apostle expresses it, 2 Cor. 8. 12.) First of all a *Ready Mind*, and a true Generous Principle : If what you do be not out of pure Design to promote the Good and Happiness of others, all your Acts of Charity and Mercy are little worth, while you grudgingly relieve the Necessities of your Neighbours, you do it meerly in Kindness to your selves, and to get rid of their troublesome Clamour and Importunity : And instead of gratifying their Request, you, by the Donation, purchase much rather your own Quietness and Repose. As the Unjust Judge in the Gospel, St. Luk. 18. 5. *Tho' he neither fear'd God, nor regarded man, would nevertheless avenge the widow, rather than be troubled with her continual noise.*

It is the Chearfulness and Alacrity of the Donour, that renders the Gift acceptable :

able : He who gives readily , does as good as Twice give, and a single Benefit, thus conferr'd, makes double the Obligation. It shews indeed a Noble and Generous Spirit, and that what you do is not out of Pride or Pharisaical Ostentation : neither out of a Desire of popular Applause , nor the Hope of gaining a great Name or Repute in the World. No : This is nothing but Pageantry and Show, and makes Men shine but with a borrowed Lustre. The only way to Aggrandize and Magnify an Action, is the Circumstance and Manner of doing it, and the Largeness of the Heart is best discovered by an open and plentiful Hand.

And as in all Acts of this Nature, there should never be wanting Readiness of Mind ; so should you proportionate your Charity and Alms according to that Power and Ability wherewith you are blest from Above. You must not scant or confine your selves in the Communication of your good Things ; but readily contribute to those your Fellow-Citizens that stand in need of your Assistance and Support ; As being very well assur'd with the Wise-man, *That*

he that hath Mercy on the Poor lendeth to the Lord, and that which he giveth will he pay him again. Prov. 19. 17. That the Liberal Soul shall be made Fat, and that he that Watereth, shall be also Watered himself. Chap. 11. 25. And this likewise we have from the Mouth of the Royal Prophet, Psal. 41. 1. Blessed is he that considereth the Poor and Needy, the Lord will surely deliver him in the time of Trouble. And, in a Word, GOD hath promised, that he shall not only Flourish and Prosper in this Life; but hereafter shall receive that Blessed Sentence, Well done Good and Faithful Servant, enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord. A Glorious Reward indeed, of Great and Vertuous Actions, and truly deserving our strictest Practice; since according to our Behaviour in this respect, we shall in that Day be either Justified, or Condemned.

But on the contrary, (especially on Publick and Solemn Occasions,) when the Honour of so Great and Populous a City, wholly depends upon the Free and Liberal Temper of us, that are its Natives, whose Example alone should raise a Generous Emu-

Emulation among those that are round about us: I say, when (at such a time at least) we begin to grow Languid, Cold, and Remiss in our Duty, When instead of Loving our Neighbours, as our Selves, we Love no Body, but our Selves: When Covetousness once begins to take Root in our Hearts, and the Love of Mammon to grow more prevalent, than the Love of GOD. In short, When our own Private Interests shall out-balance our Duty towards our Neighbours, Farewel then to every thing that is truly Honourable and Great: what less can we expect, than a total Defection of Christian Charity, and instead of Peace and Amity, what less than Division and Confusion? In as much as, that without the mutual Obligations of Love and Kindness, no Society can possibly Subsist. And if those Obligations are maintain'd by Reciprocal Acts of Friendship, and Charity, then sure it must follow, by necessary and unavoidable Consequence, that the Constant Practice of this our Duty, *viz.* Of *doing Good, and Communicating*, is of Indispensable Necessity, and indeed the strongest Cement and Support of all Communities.

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The Happiness and Prosperity of the whole Body entirely depends upon a due Subordination of the Members ; In which each Part does contribute, as much as in it lies, to promote and set forward the Common Welfare. And thus we see, what a Mighty Great and Controuling Influence, this Noble and Generous Vertue Carries with it throughout the Universe: And therefore seeing it is of that Use and Importance to us, as we are allied by the more than Common Tie of Nature, and Fellow-Citizenship ; were this, I say, the only Obligation whereby we are bound, surely it must needs be a great and convincing Argument, to Excite, and Encourage us to do Good, and to Communicate to each others Wants, tho' the Apostle had never acquainted us, that by so doing, *We offer up a Sacrifice of a sweet smelling Savour, Grateful and Acceptable in the sight of God.*

II. Which brings me to the Second Thing propos'd, Namely, to prove, That thus *to do Good, and to Communicate, is a Grateful and Acceptable Sacrifice in the Sight of God*, and truly becoming our Christian Pro-

Profession. And this I shall endeavour to make Evident and Plain, from Arguments drawn, First, from Reason, and Secondly, from Scripture.

First, from Reason. And first of all, That which renders us most like, and causeth us to resemble the Divine Perfections most, can't but make us appear Grateful and Acceptable in the Sight of God. To imitate his Infinite Goodness, is to imitate his most Darling and Beloved Attribute, in which he takes the greatest Complacency and Delight. For what else, I fain would know, could induce him to Create such a Noble and Glorious Order of Things, and Beautify and Adorn it, after so strange and wonderful a manner, to assign the Reasoning Faculty to Mankind, and on him alone to stamp his Royal and Divine Image, *To give him Dominion over the works of his Hands, and put all things in Subjection under his Feet?* What could cause him, when by the Fatal Revolt of our First Parents, we were lapsed from our Primitive Innocence and Integrity, and thereby fallen from a State of Happiness and Perfection, into a State of Misery and
Death;